

HOW TO... Work with files in Windows Explorer

The more files you have on your PC, the harder it is to keep them all in order. Lynley Oram explains how Windows Explorer can help

How do you find your way around the files on your computer? Perhaps you use a program's Open command, or maybe you prefer My Computer. A quick and easy way to move around folders and jump from file to file, particularly if the files use very different programs, is through Windows Explorer. You'll find this in the Start menu under All Programs, although it is faster to press the Windows and E keys simultaneously. Here we'll show you how to make the most of this handy tool in Windows XP.

1 On the left-hand side of Windows Explorer is a list of the folders on your computer; the right-hand side shows the contents of a selected folder. Files on the right can be shown in several ways. Click on the last button on the toolbar at the top of the window and select a view from the drop-down menu. The most informative is Details. You can change the types of information displayed. Right-click on a heading, such as Name or Size. From the list that appears, select other headings you find useful. So in the My Music folder, having the Artist and Album name would be helpful.

2 By default, Windows Explorer picks Tiles as the view for folders when they're opened the first time. If you change that to Details, for example, the next time you open that folder it will be in Details view.

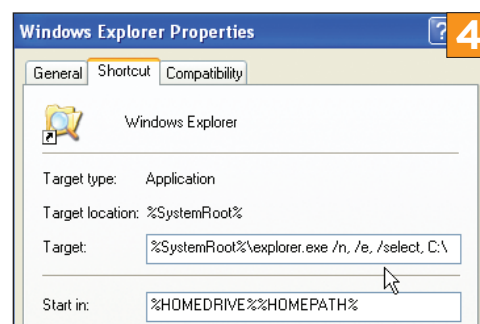
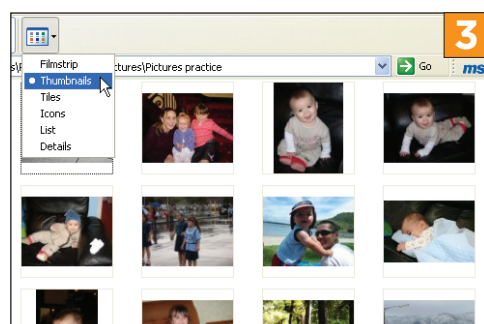
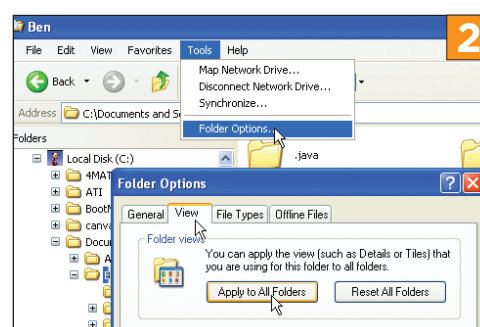
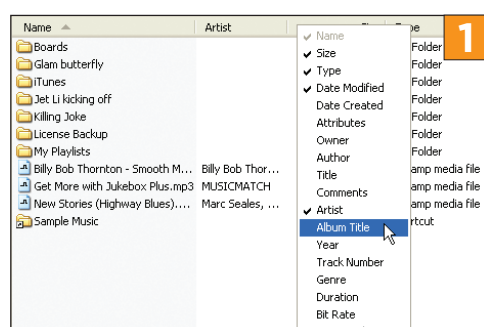
However, if you open another folder, you'll be back to Tiles again. To have all the folders use your desired view, open a folder or change one to the view you want. Then go to the Tools menu and select Folder Options. On the View tab, click the Apply to all folders button.

3 Use keyboard shortcuts to make your life easier. Quickly maximise Windows Explorer to full screen by pressing the F11 key. To view thumbnails without the unnecessary file names, hold down the Shift key when you select the Thumbnail view. When you're copying lots of files from one folder to another, Windows tells you if there's another file in the destination folder with the same name. There is a Yes to all, but not a No to all. To do this, hold down the Shift key when you press No.

4 Windows Explorer opens with My Documents selected. If you would like Windows Explorer to open in the C: drive (or whichever letter is allocated to your hard disk), try this: go to the Windows Explorer icon in your Start menu and right-click. Select Properties from the menu that appears. In the Target box enter:

```
%SystemRoot%\explorer.exe /n, /e, /select, C:\
```

Then all you need to do is press OK.



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